

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4 and 7-48 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7 and 13 are amended, claims 5 and 6 are canceled and new claims 18-48 are added.

Applicant appreciates the indication in the Office Action that claims 8-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 6 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 6 to place claim 1 and its dependent claims into allowable form. In incorporating the subject matter of claim 6 into claim 1, care has been taken to avoid the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In addition, new independent claims 18, 27 and 37, respectively, include the subject matter of claims 8, 9 and 11, which the Examiner also indicated to be allowable if rewritten into independent form.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all the claims are patentable and that the entire application is allowable.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, in the fee(s) filed, or asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Account No. 14-1140 under Order No. PTB-1207-121.

SASAHARA
Appl. No. 10/549,446
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Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, he is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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